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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [UN](#) [KWBG](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: GOI REJECTS COOPERATION WITH GOLDSTONE MISSION

Classified By: DCM Luis G, Moreno, Reason 1.4 (b) (d)

¶1. (C) MFA Deputy Director General for UN and International Organizations Affairs Evyatar Manor told Pol Couns May 11 that the GOI has definitively decided not to cooperate with the Goldstone Mission to investigate allegations of war crimes during Operation Cast Lead in Gaza. Manor stressed that while the GOI respects Justice Goldstone personally, and that he has strong personal and professional ties to Israel's legal community, the GOI decided that the mission could not produce a fair result because it originated from a January Human Rights Council resolution on the Gaza operation that put the entire burden on Israel and did not even mention Hamas. The practical implications of the GOI's boycott are that no GOI officials, including Ambassador to Geneva-based UN organizations Ronni Leshno-Yaar, are authorized to meet with Goldstone and the Goldstone Mission will not be allowed to enter Gaza through Israel. Manor said that Goldstone will instead establish an office in Egyptian Rafah and enter Gaza from the Egyptian side.

¶2. (C) Manor admitted that the GOI decision-making process was slowed due to Goldstone's close ties to a number of Israeli legal experts, some of whom lobbied the GOI to engage Goldstone. Goldstone also wrote to Ambassador Leshno-Yaar in Geneva and requested a meeting to discuss his mission. Leshno-Yaar consulted with MFA, which produced the final decision to boycott Goldstone. Manor said the results of the UN's Board of Inquiry last week was the decisive factor in convincing the GOI that nothing positive could come out of cooperation with Goldstone. Manor said Goldstone has argued that he would have the independence to produce a balanced report, but the Israelis remained convinced that the HRC framework would necessarily prevent a fair outcome, particularly in light of the BOI report.

¶3. (C) Manor noted that Israeli diplomatic missions will be in touch with the EU, non-EU WEOP members, and some other members of the HRC to explain Israel's position.

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